

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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USIE-00 INRE-00 /072 W

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O R 240639Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2147

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 8851

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJ: PAKISTAN TIMES STORY ON MILITARY SUPPLY

REF: A) NEW DELHI 12816; B) STATE 227357; C) ISLAMABAD 8802

1. INDIA WIRE SERVICE STORY IN REFTEL A BASICALLY
INACCURATE AND MISLEADING. SELECTIVE QUOTATIONS FROM
BURKI ARTICLE GIVE IMPLICATION OF CHANGE IN US POLICY
WHICH DOES NOT REFLECT OUR POSITION OR PAK UNDER-
STANDING OF IT.

2. EMBASSY STRUCK BY GENERAL ACCURACY AND MODERATE
TONE OF BURKI ARTICLE. THE EMPHASIS ON A REALISTIC
APPRAISAL OF THE CONSTRAINTS ON US SALES TO PAKISTAN
ESTABLISHES THE RIGHT TONE FOR THE STORY. BURKI HAS
EMPHASIZED SEVERAL POINTS THAT ACCURATELY REFLECT US
POLICY TOWARD ARMS SALES TO THE SUBCONTINENT.

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3. FIRST, STORY NOTES THAT HIGH PRIORITY LIST CONTAINS

ONLY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS. HE FURTHER STATES THAT PAKISTAN DOES HAVE A NEED FOR MORE SOPHISTICATED OFFENSIVE WEAPONS TO REPLACE AGING EQUIPMENT, BUT THAT CONSTRAINTS EXIST ON WILLINGNESS OF US TO PROVIDE SUCH MATERIAL. THE THREE LIMITATIONS HE MENTIONS -- PAKISTAN'S LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES, CONCERN IN OUR CONGRESS OVER ARMS SALES TO THE AREA, AND OTHER POLITICAL CONCERNS IN THE US INCLUDING OUR POLICY THAT WE WILL NOT UPSET THE ARMS EQUATION ON THE SUBCONTINENT -- ARE WELL KNOWN AND SERVE TO EMPHASIZE THE LIMITED AND RESPONSIBLE POSITION USG HAS TAKEN. BURKI'S FINAL POINT -- THAT PAKISTAN MAY HAVE TO LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR ARMS -- STRENGTHENS FACT THAT US IS NOT GOING TO BECOME A MAJOR ARMS SUPPLIER TO THE REGION AND THAT PAKISTAN UNDERSTANDS THIS POSITION.

4. OUR GENERAL VIEW IS THAT IF A STORY ON ARMS PURCHASES FROM THE US WAS TO APPEAR IN PAK PRESS, AS WAS EVENTUALLY INEVITABLE, BURKI'S ARTICLE IS RESPONSIBL, ACCURATE AND REFLECTS THE WELL-UNDERSTOOD CONSTRAINTS ON OUR POLICY. BURKI HAS EXCELLENT CONTACTS WITHIN GOP AND WE ASSUME HE PIECED STORY TOGETHER FROM SEVERAL SOURCES. SINCE IT IS FACUTUAL AND NOT SENSATIONALIST, THE GOP WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTIES WITH ITS PUBLICATION.

5. EMBASSY SUGGESTS ONE CHANGE IN PRESS GUIDANCE CONTAINED PARA 2, REFTEL B. ALTHOUGH GUIDANCE LITERALLY ACCURATE, WE ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED THAT FOURTH SENTENCE BEGINNING QUOTE THESE DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING... END QUOTE, MAY BE MISLEADING. FYI - WE HAVE SOLD SEVERAL ITEMS TO THE GOP SINCE EMBARGO WAS LIFTED BUT ALL WOULD HAVE BEEN SOLD UNDER OUR PRE-FEBRUARY POLICY. DURING THE PAST SEVEN MONTHS WE HAVE NOT SOLD ANYTHING TO THE ARMY, HAVE SOLD \$200,000 WORTH OF SPARE PARTS TO THE NAVY, AND VARIOUS ITEMS TO THE AIR FORCE INCLUDING RADIOS, GEAR BOXES, PUBLICATIONS AND GROUND HANDLING EQUIPMENT. END FYI. IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING, SUGGEST THAT FOURTH AND FIFTH SENTENCES READ QUOTE THESE DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING AND NO SALES HAVE YET BEEN MADE OR DECISIONS REACHED ON ANY SALES UNDER THIS NEW POLICY. ANY NEW SALES WILL STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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GUIDELINES ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 24. END QUOTE.
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